

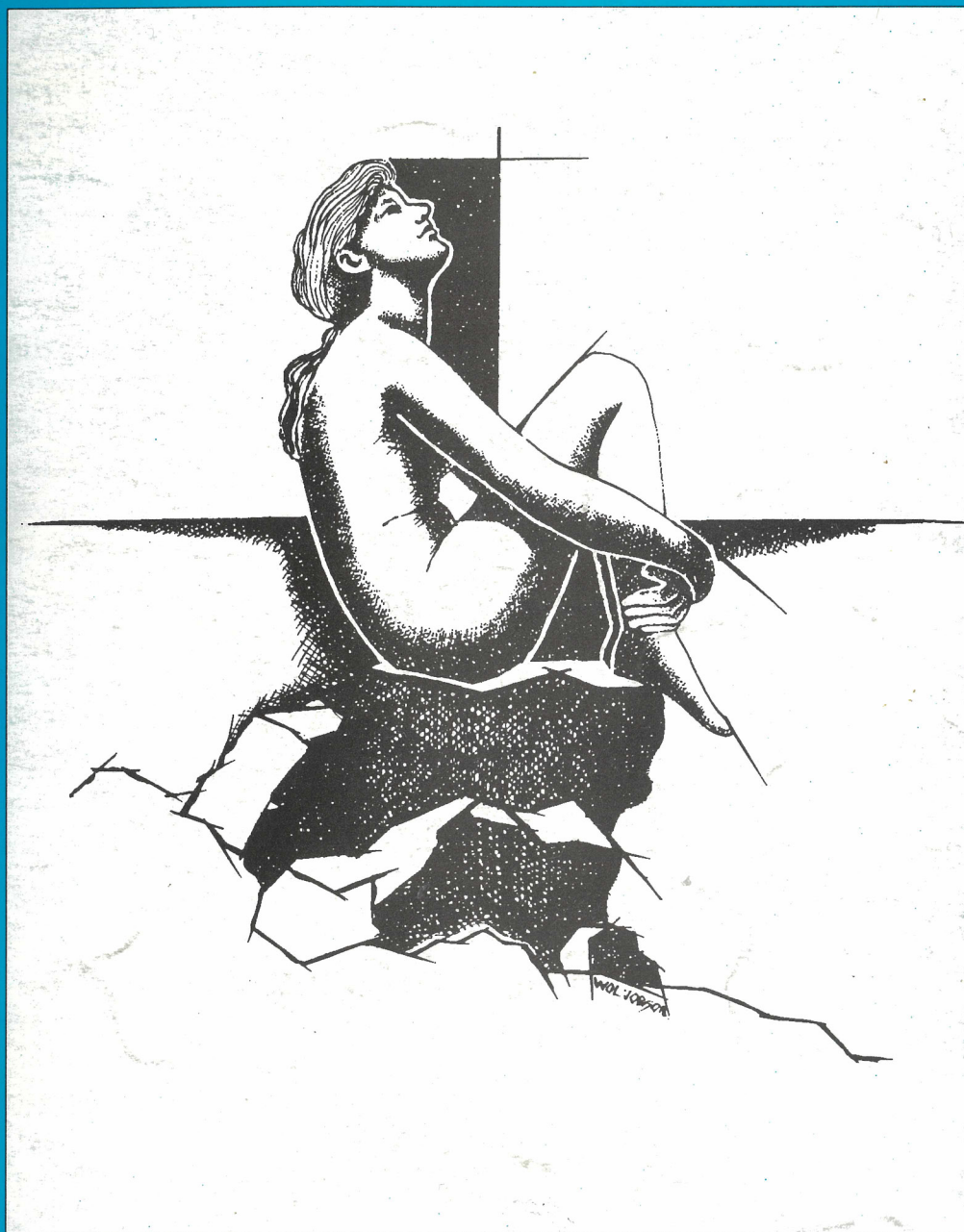
THIS issue
What YOU think
about SIREN

Sex Industry Rights & Education Network

NZPC

SIREN

Magazine for Sex Industry Workers



Issue 4/1991

• ISO 3297 - 1975 •

NZ Prostitutes Collective

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SIREN

Sex Industry Rights & Education Network

October 1991

14 Cover Feature

What YOU think of SIREN - find out what readers have to say about the magazine: the good, the bad, and the indifferent.

Thanks to all the people who have contributed to and made this issue possible. Siren is a magazine for all people in the sex industry, so if you would like your viewpoint heard, drop us a line.

Deadline: The next issue of SIREN comes out in December. Contributions for that issue should be sent in by November 30.

Send your ideas and contributions to:

SIREN Magazine
NZPC
PO Box 11-412,
Manners Street
WELLINGTON.

Disclaimer: *Opinions expressed or information given in this magazine are not necessarily those of the NZ Prostitutes Collective.*

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Comment from Wellington

The response to the survey in SIREN 1 1991 exceeded our expectations with more than 100 replies to date. (*See pages 14 to 16 for selected comments – ed*)

An independent researcher is analysing the results and we'll let you know in more detail about these findings (no, it's not that we're too stupid to do this ourselves – just that every year we have to have an outsider evaluate our progress to meet the conditions of our contract with the **Department of Health**). However, most of you appreciate the magazine, but would like to see more of them, more frequently. Obviously we would like to see this happen too. However, (wait for it...the bleat) time and money are the two big inhibitors preventing us from being able to achieve this.

Currently most of us who work for NZPC are volunteers – funding only stretches to enable us to employ two part-time workers. So bear with us and let's continue to work together to make this magazine useful to the diverse group it is trying to provide a forum for in the sex industry. Thank you all for your contributions.

Catherine Healy,
Organiser, NZPC.

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FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE PLEASE SEND US

Articles: Topical, Funny, Interesting, Irreverent or whatever. Send them in!

"What Gets on my Goat":

Is there anything sex industry workers like more than a whinge? Send us your gripes (anonymously if you like). Write in, and get it off your chest!

"Gossip Line":

Write in and tell us juicy tit bits that you have heard around the town.

All letters will be published.

Send to S.I.R.E.N., (N.Z.P.C.) (Please state which column i.e. "Gossip Line")
P.O. Box 11-412
Manners Street
WELLINGTON

INDEPENDENT NURSING PRACTICE FOR NELSON WORKERS

The Independent Nursing Practice based in Nelson have contacted NZPC advertising their health services. They provide:

- cervical smears
- sexually transmitted diseases – test and treatment
- pregnancy tests and counselling
- pre-menstrual tension and menopause management
- stress management

- general health
- health information
- massage

Confidentiality is guaranteed. For further information contact the Independent Nursing Practice on (03) 546 8155. Situated at 35 Nile Street, Nelson.



The unhappy people of New Zealand

How are the unemployed people meant to manage on this Social Welfare system that we have in this country at the moment. The money that they get is not very much to live on and then they have to either go to work on the street, or take to robbery and then get in trouble with the law, before the courts and either get fined or go to JAIL. Most people can not pay any sorts of fines so that they still end up in jail or on community work.

If the Benefits were put back to the rate they were at the beginning of this year at least I think half of our troubles will be over and people will be able to buy food to live on and live a reasonable life.

By a Worker from the Unemployed Workers Union. Name Supplied and Withheld

A worker writes

I wrote to you some time back about getting involved in "volunteer" work with the Dunedin branch of the NZPC. I've since made contact with Wendy and things are underway.

...also since then I've had the chance to read several copies of your excellent magazine, "SIREN". I was a member of the Australian Prostitutes Collective for some years in the mid to late eighties, when I was a worker in Sydney. Unlike here in NZ we were financial members in that there was a small membership fee...only \$3.00 if I remember rightly. We would receive occasional visits from APC workers, mainly the lovely Roberta Perkins. Free condoms were on offer, at that time, as well as ugly mug lists and the occasional newsletter... but I don't remember ever seeing an Industry Magazine. The magazine that you/we put out here is great, a real asset to workers in the sex industry.

When I worked in Oz, I was a bit younger and hope-

lessly addicted to heroin, ...so I felt doubly outcast from the rest of the culture. To find out that we workers had a 'union' (which is how I viewed the PC) was a real boost to my esteem. And to know that it was run by ex or current workers was extra good. It for me was the first time I hadn't felt judged or condemned as a prostitute or a drug addict. It felt great then and still does that we are organised and have our own voice/s. To know that we take responsibility to make our work safer, healthier and less stigmatised is very empowering. Since my days in Sydney, I had treatment for drug addiction and took 3 years off "work". I've since then re-entered the industry on occasions when I've had some big bill or wanted to get some money together for some particular thing, and now very much want to support the NZPC and those of us who work in NZ.

SIREN is an excellent publication. To read its pages with helpful advice for beginners, health info, shared strengths, support offered to each other and Us giving ourselves Voice is a real buzz.

Keep up the good work NZPC, and maybe I'll see some of you at the Dunedin office sometime.

*NZPC worker, Dunedin
Name supplied*

A Client's Perspective

I find it a doleful life, and also impossible to get a sexual relationship outside of the sex industry.

In general society I have been to social workers, counselling, and have been assessed and put through social skills courses. I put every effort into it, but at the time the programme did not work because general society takes a narrow and cruel attitude.

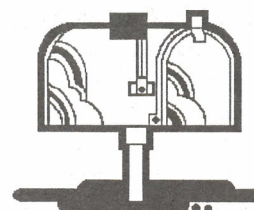
As I am getting older, the world is getting tougher, and it is harder to get a job. The benefit cuts aren't helping me either.

I am grateful to have the sex industry to go to because of the close man and woman contact. Not only sex, but healthy love to keep my sanity!!!

P.S. Public attitudes will have to be changed, more jobs created, more money put into education, health, and a lot more money put into research for a cure for AIDS and cancer.

Also, there needs to be promotion of condoms on radio, tv, books and through music. Stamp out violence and the anti-sex attitude in our society.

Name and address withheld





TALKABOUT

RAPE OF PROSTITUTE GETS LESSER PENALTY

A British judge sentenced a rapist yesterday to three years in jail, though the recommended minimum is five years, because his victim was a "common prostitute".

"While every woman is entitled to complain about their body being violated, someone who for years has flaunted their body and sold it cannot complain as loudly as someone who has not behaved in such a way," Mr Justice Alliot said at the Old Bailey.

He said he could find no legal guidelines on how to deal with a man convicted of raping a prostitute. "I find this a very difficult sentencing exercise."

William Readings, 28, of London, was found guilty of raping the woman, 28 on May 10. The court was told she had 67 convictions for soliciting but, the judge said, "the stark fact is that even such a woman is entitled to say no".

The court was told she got into a car with Readings, his father and another man, who each agreed a fee for sex with her. However, she said she was driven against her will to southeast London, where she was raped by Readings. *Dominion 2 August 1991*

AID TO PROSTITUTES

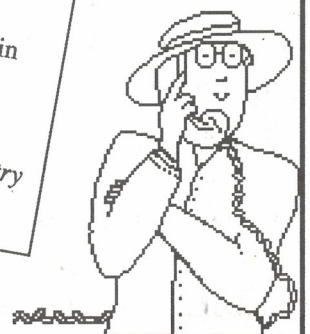
The British Government is paying for condoms for housewives entering prostitution to pay housing and food bills in an area of high unemployment. Social workers will trace women in recession-hit South Wales who have resorted to selling sex and offer them free condoms and AIDS advice.

CAN ANYONE SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS?

- A worker has a client who has a foreskin which is so long that every time she puts a condom on him it rolls off.
- Where can a person with an allergy to rubber find natural skin condoms?

INDONESIA: MAYOR THREATENS TO SHAVE PROSTITUTES' HEADS

JAKARTA, Indonesia (Reuter) Prostitutes in Indonesia's northern city of Banda Aceh will be forced to parade through the streets with their heads shaved if they are caught plying their trade, the city's mayor has warned. Mayor Ifrizal Yunus issued the warning to try to wipe out prostitution and restore the city's devoutly Muslim image, the *Binis Indonesia* newspaper reported yesterday. Officials say about 650 prostitutes are operating in Aceh (pronounced Achay) and neighbouring Lhokseumawe City. Non-government institutions protested when authorities in Lhokseumawe announce similar punishment for prostitutes. *Lets not forget that 90% of the sex industry - the clients - are male!*



A Small Piece of Blue

My name is Harriet. I have been working as a prostitute the last few months, and this is the story of my experience. An experience that made me weaker and that also has made me stronger. And to all the working women out there, I implore you to always remember your dreams. Thank you and all the best.

I sit cross legged on my foam mattress bed and stare out the windows. I can only see part of the sky, because the house in front is too close and shields the view.

It is like a cell, my place a small white-washed cell, with a small window looking out onto a small world, and a small piece of blue above the roof. But I am glad, glad to have something that is mine, where I can go at the end of the night, glad to have my small, but safe retreat.

I have been here a week now, spending most of my time curled up in bed, rocking trying to ease the anxiety, the paranoia that has, of late, wrapped itself around me like a blanket. When I go out, I walk down the long hill through the park to town, to wander around, or to sit in the mall and watch the people.

I feel numb mostly (except for those rushes of anxiety) and live automatically, as if half in a dream. It is safe that way – I am untouchable.

Sometimes, I think that people know, that they can read the invisible sign on my back that says "prostitute", and I laugh, I laugh at their surprise, at their ignorance and at the power that a secret can hold. To them I am probably just another unemployed person, a dole bludger, another one of the crowd – and I guess I am. Some people do know of course, my sister, my cousin, my close friends, but that's all.

At night, it is almost a relief to climb the stairs and be greeted by the familiar sound of the buzzer, as I am spied by the camera that balances high up between the wall and

ceiling. I feel safe again inside my second secret world, that is so warm and cushioned from the outside by its soft red lights and rich furnishings. I step out of my day-time skin, into a sexy red dress and black high heels, lightly paint my face and admire my red lips. I love the transformation. I am on stage again.

Work is good when it is busy, there's no time to think or question. Its just client after client, the same conversation the same routine: up the stairs, into the shower, back to the room for a massage...and then on with the condom, a quick fuck (if you are lucky), back to the shower, dab of lipstick, quick comb of the hair, back downstairs and out the door...Whew! an easy \$100.

It's a world of pretence. I go through the motions time and time again, not remembering faces, not remembering names, smiling at the right times, nodding in agreement to words I don't want to hear, but when I am there, the outside world does not exist, and all there is is the work. If it wasn't for the girls I'm sure I'd be insane. They are great. I have come by the occasional dizzy bitch, but mostly they are wonderful, intelligent and talented women. I wonder why the hell they are here. I wonder why the hell I am here.

Now it is 3 months later, and I am in a new flat that has a bath. I lie in the bath for hours.

The weeks have gone by without me noticing and I have stopped going to my parents for the weekends, because



my lies are eating at me. My mother calls me once a week with an inquiring, verging on intruding, voice "I am fine Mum" I say. "Everything's pretty normal, you know how it is"...nothing more, nothing less, she wants more but I don't have it to give.

I know there is a letter coming for me soon. I can feel it. It arrives one day and I pick it out of the letterbox after work. It is from Kate. I don't want to read it but I will of course, sitting on my mattress with the dim lamp on at 5 o'clock in the morning. I open it. I have never been one for opening letters carefully, or with a knife. I just tear at it and leave the envelope with rough edges, the letter is written on jotter pad paper, the kind that Kate and I always use, it is long, perhaps 10 pages as I read I feel myself sinking into a cold fear in the pit of my stomach, each word touches me deeper, and I wonder how she can be so astute and know me so well.

In my tired state I don't resist myself on her words, and for the first time in a long time, I am feeling tired again. My dreams flood back, my fear, my anger, my confusion, and I find tears streaming down my face.

She challenges me, and my choice of prostitution, questions my true motivation. Is it really just the money? I thought that I knew. I thought I had it under control.

I reach for my pen and began to write, the words slide onto the page easily, running into one another to keep up with my flow of thoughts and feelings. I used to be a believer of dreams, and miracles, I write. My dreams held me to my life, gave me hope. My dreams allowed me to be free in myself, to believe in who I was, to not compromise my soul, to not be caught in the ways of the city; the city that grabs the death in me, and feeds it with a piece of chocolate cake, and a new dress.

But this world is not for dreams. It shatters them, goes out of its way to keep you from your freedom, makes you struggle, makes you suffer. I had held onto my dreams like a new gift, but still they seemed to slowly shatter before my very eyes, and this where I find it in my rage: It says, "Fuck the world" "fuck all you white middle class arseholes who rule!" "Fuck life!" "Fuck death" "And Fuck you bastards, I will use and abuse you to get what I want!"

This is my attempt to reclaim my power, the power to get out of this sick society and live freely. This is my attempt to take revenge on the men who are strangling me and this beautiful world we live on. And yet some thing is not quite right. Why do I feel so sick? And why do I feel like I'm losing my soul? Who really has the power here? The women or the men?

If prostitution, the oldest profession in the world, were to truly re-empower women, then the world would not be the place it is today, because where is the power? I can't see it. I don't hear it. I still see the same old thing: mothers, daughters, wives struggling to get what they deserve. Struggling to hold onto the little freedom that they have.

\$100 suddenly seems like nothing for the price of one's soul. I had thought when I first started working that I could separate my body and my soul, but now I see that they are more closely related than I have ever realised. And I wonder too does the most creative energy in the world, when abused, become the most destructive? I feel as if I have been caught in a net that is too long and too wide for me to its beginning or its end, and I want to get out.

I sit motionless in my dimly-lit room, my pen rests on the paper, exhausted and there's nothing left to write.

I have learned so much from this world, this game, that seems so inviting, so attractive, but now it is time to stop playing. I'm not sure of the rules anymore, and I'm not sure if there is any winner. So it's time to leave, move on, time for my dreams, my life.

The first thread of the netting that has surrounded me has been cut, and the way out seems clear enough. What I'd do when I get out there? thoughts fill me with fear. How to live? How to find my dreams again? How to believe in myself? I don't know. It seems like a hard road to follow.

So God knows how I will get there and God knows what I will do I guess there will be some small miracle waiting for me somewhere, and if the worst comes to the worst, even if I am homeless and penniless, I will always have myself.



A Brief History of Prostitution

*The following article is a brief summary of the history of prostitution.
The author wishes to remain anonymous.*

Often referred to as the oldest profession, the origins of prostitution are unknown, but ancient Babylonian theological and mythological literature make reference to prostitutes in relation to "Ishtar", the Goddess of fertility. She was an erotic seductress, identified with the planet Venus.

Ancient social organisation held women to be the property of men, and women were greatly restricted and controlled by men, both economically and through strict family roles.

Early prostitution had religious associations, with temple prostitutes performing symbolic religious sexual acts, and priestesses ran houses of prostitution. Prostitutes were stigmatised, although prostitution itself was recognised and accepted in Babylonia. The emphasis on women as men's property placed a high value on female virginity and chastity, while male promiscuity was accepted and unchallenged. Here can be seen the beginnings of double standard which has existed over time, and which is directly related to the existence of prostitutes as a class of women who are placed outside the domain of female respectability in order to protect "decent" women, while at the same time provide men with a steady supply of commercial, uncomplicated sex.

Similar arrangements existed in ancient Rome, which was a male centred society, with the male head of the household having absolute power of life and death over his wife, children and slaves. Low class slaves worked on the streets or in brothels, while upper class "courtesans" were kept women who often served as long term mistresses. Prostitution was tolerated in Rome, and even taxed – but it was a low status profession. It was looked on as a necessary evil, which protected the important place of women as mothers.

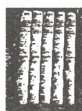
This attitude was adapted and modified by Christianity, which is reflected in the emphasis placed on celibacy as an ideal state. To indulge in sex was to succumb to temptations and the pleasures of the flesh – which was seen as sinful and unspiritual. This notion also reinforced the mistrust of female sexuality, the virgin is seen as spiritually and physi-

cally pure and untainted; while at the opposite extreme the prostitute is regarded as a fallen woman (although worthy of being saved...). Women were seen as temptresses, luring men into lust and debauchery. Once again though, while women's sexual activities were restricted, men's promiscuity was tolerated and excused.

With this double standard around sex, which stems from men dominating women – prostitution will continue to flourish. Prostitution, it could be said, is as old as the double standard it is based on.

Over time, efforts to explain the existence of prostitution have been quite consistent. Some of these explanations are: that it is a necessary institution designed to preserve marriage; that it is necessary because without prostitutes, men would attack respectable women in the streets. Other theories have looked at individual characteristics of prostitutes. In 1895, two theorists concluded that prostitutes were biological throwbacks to an earlier stage on the evolutionary scale, therefore similar to "primitive" women with uncontrollable sex drives. Sigmund Freud concluded that prostitutes were caught in a trap of unresolved childhood frustrations regarding attachment to parents, which results in promiscuous behaviour.

These theories are obviously unsatisfactory. They completely fail to account for the social, structural and economic factors involved in prostitution. Friedrich Engels took account of these factors when discussing prostitution. He argued that prostitution is a result of women's subordinate status in capitalist societies. He likened prostitution to marriage, arguing that wives and prostitutes more or less perform the same roles. Both marriage and prostitution serve to keep capitalism going, while at the same time also make sure oppression and exploitation thrive. This theory does have some use, unlike earlier ones, because it at least places prostitution in its social context – a product of a capitalist society.



Well, firstly as a worker what do you think?

The politicians think of us as unfit nympho's breaking the law – at least from 9 till 5 anyway. Once inside the parlour they think we're the greatest women alive, pampering and pleasing their every arrogant wish. And the silly fools think we enjoy it.

What is a Prostitute?

Men in general, not forgetting the few understanding ones, share pretty much the same view as our political... "friends"? All prostitutes are either sex hungry nymphettes, or two bit sluts fucking for the sheer want of it and charging happily for the privilege.

Women have their view too. They think mostly that prostitutes are immoral easy lays with no standards, or sense of being. Most people would like to see us stamped out forever. I wonder what they'd say if we were, and sexual abuse increased by say, double to two thirds of what it is now. I wonder who they'd scream at and blame first. Us, or themselves? I truly wonder.

So, what is a prostitute? Could they be someone, male or female or transperson, on drugs or unable or perhaps uneducated enough... or just plain old too honest to find an alternative way of making enough money to support a habit which may have come about by family stress, childhood brutality in the home, a life of orphanages, institutions and instability, childhood sex abuse, alcoholism.

Could a prostitute be a person who simply finds themselves overcome with debt and in a financial rut, who then turns to prostitution against his or her better wants as an ends to a means. Could a prostitute be a professional type, teachers, lawyers or corporate officials – who are sick to death of doing twice as much for half as much, to prove they can do just enough in a world of men who love to lay them. And in their aspiration turn to prostitution as a means of being their own person. A way of being totally independent in a job that pays her what she's worth.

Could a prostitute be a gay male, or a transvestite, or a transexual who finds themselves so unaccepted by society that prostitution is the only means left to make an income.

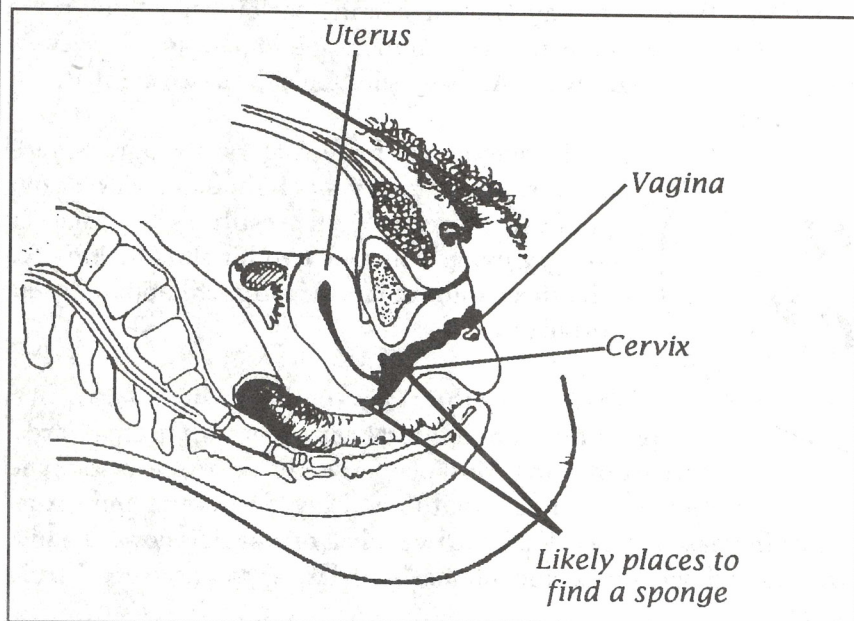
LAST OF ALL, AND CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, COULD A PROSTITUTE SIMPLY BE A NORMAL EVERYDAY PERSON DOING A NOT SO NORMAL EVERYDAY JOB?

Now, we in society with our high and mighty views know that this could not possibly be true. Ask any man who beats his wife because he feels guilty for playing around on her, or any woman who's married to her husband for financial security, or the judge who goes to parlours for bondage and discipline because he can't handle or feels guilty about the authoritative powers he has.... Or any man who goes to a parlour for an easy lay because no one at the disco wants him.

No indeed, prostitutes just are not normal people at all...OR ARE THEY?

by Jennine Chapman

Oh my gosh I've lost it!!!



Sigmund Freud, the grandfather of psychiatry, had a theory that women suffer from "penis envy".

He was right of course – when you think about two

situations. One, when you're up in the high country with a full bladder, and the snow is lying thick on the ground... and two, when you think you've lost your sea sponge....

Some women worry that their sponge has gone up into their tummy somewhere when they can't feel it but know it's there.

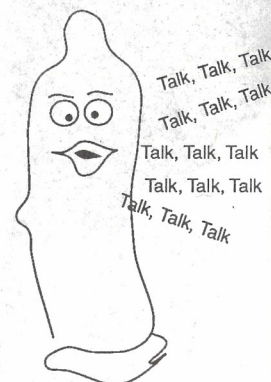
Keep cool, relax, and have a look at this diagram. Your cervix, which blocks off the end of the vagina and feels a bit rubbery, like the tip of your nose, remains closed except in childbirth – so your sponge can't get up into your uterus. The chances are that it's tucked up beside the cervix.

Put your finger(s) inside. Gently feel around the cervix. You may do better in a squatting position. You should feel the sponge moving under your finger.

Soak sea sponges in salt water (2tsp to 1 cup of water), then rinse before replacing.

Needless to say, if you've had a condom failure whilst using a sponge, you'll need to thoroughly disinfect it or boil it for ten minutes.

1. Don't cut your sponge into pieces which are too small.
2. You may like to try tying a length of dental floss to the sponge to make removal easier.



FOR THE MEN IN THE INDUSTRY

What happens to men when they go to the Sexual Health Service?

They will be asked why they came, and asked about their health and past illnesses. They will be asked about the kind of sex they have been having. This alerts the staff about where to look for infection.

The examiner will look carefully for rashes and sores, especially around the sex organs.

They may have some tests done, including blood and urine tests. Some swabs may be taken from just inside the penis,

especially if any discharge is present. This is almost always a painless procedure.

Obvious infections will be treated "on the spot". Others are treated when test results are available from the laboratories.

Men have a common misunderstanding that an "umbrella" test is performed. This is not so, no such test exists.

If an infection is found, men will be asked to inform their partner(s) so that they can be treated at the same

time. There is not point in treating one person **where STDs are concerned.**

STD Nurse, Letter to Siren

The Law: Working in a Massage Parlour – NZPC Interprets...

Following on from the section in the last issue of SIREN on "The Law and You", this issue of SIREN will cover what the Massage Parlour Act specifically says about working in a parlour, and look at how NZPC interprets this. The laws are contradictory and confusing, but whoever said that our legal system made any sense?

In this article, the Massage Parlour Act 1978 will be dealt with, and in the next issue of SIREN we will cover the sections in the Crimes Act and the Summary Offences Act which relate to soliciting, brothel keeping, living off the earnings of prostitution and procuring.

In a nutshell, prostitution itself is not illegal in NZ, although the current laws which govern the above offences make it virtually impossible to be a sex worker and stay within the law.

RULES FOR MASSAGE PARLOUR WORKERS

Under Section 18 of the Massage Parlour Act no one may work in a parlour who:

- is under 18
- has any convictions for – soliciting, brothel keeping, living off the earnings of prostitution, procuring — in the last ten years
- has any offence against the Narcotics Act
- has any offence against the Misuse of Drugs Act

If a parlour worker continues to work in breach of any of these restrictions, they are committing an offence that carries a fine of up to \$200.

WHAT DO THESE LAWS MEAN FOR PARLOUR WORKERS?

Because of the restrictions placed on parlour workers, if you do have any of the above convictions, or are under 18, it means you either have to lie about that – and accept the risk involved – or be forced to work outside of a massage parlour. What these laws in effect do, is force young workers and those with convictions underground.

If workers are convicted of any of the above offences, they are also forced to give up their livelihood, which is a stigma that other people with the same convictions do not necessarily face.

HOW DO THESE LAWS AFFECT PARLOUR LICENCE HOLDERS?

If parlour licence holders employ, or continue to employ any worker convicted of the above offences – they are liable to a fine of up to \$500.

In addition, they can lose the licence to operate the parlour if an act of prostitution occurred "as a result of their inability to effectively supervise the conduct of the business of the parlour".

Parlour licence holders are also required (under section 19) to keep a list of the full names of the parlour workers, their addresses, and their dates of birth.

WHAT POWERS DO THE POLICE HAVE?

Under section 32 of the Act, the police have the power to apply to the court for a massage parlour worker's employment to be terminated (on the grounds that an act of prostitution has occurred, or if the worker has been convicted of any offence) and as a result is not a "proper person" to be employed as a masseuse/masseur. Just what exactly a "proper person" is supposed to be is not defined anywhere in the Act.... If an order to terminate a worker's employment has been made by the court in the last five years, it is an offence to work in a parlour.

However, there does appear to be a loophole in this particular law. In 1981, the police in Auckland applied to the court to have an Auckland worker's employment terminated, because an act of prostitution in a parlour had been proved. To avoid a court order being made which would have prevented her from working in a parlour for five years, the worker terminated her employment at the parlour of her own accord, one day before the court hearing. At the hearing the next day, the Judge ruled that he could not make an order terminating her employment, because she was no longer employed as a masseuse. As the Judge said, "I can not terminate a vacuum". The worker was then free to resume her employment at the parlour straight after the hearing. At least this way,

The Law and You

she didn't risk being suspended from parlour work for five years.

Police are also able to inspect on demand, and make copies of the list of workers that parlour licence holders are required to keep. If parlour licence holders don't keep the list, or if they make false entries on it, or if parlour workers don't enter their details on it, or if the police are denied being able to inspect or make copies of it – the parlour licence holder is liable for a fine of up to \$200.

SUMMARY

That about covers the implications of the laws in the Massage Parlour Act for workers and parlour licence holders.

If you have any thoughts/experiences/frustrations in relation to these laws, how about writing something for the next SIREN?

NZPC

Taxation and Our Work – To Declare or Not to Declare??? (That is the Question)

We've had a few enquiries here at the NZPC drop-in centre, about declaring our income as workers... should we do it and what are the pros and cons of doing so?

If you declare your income as a worker the tax department is likely to think you're not telling all – they will probably think you earn more than you do because of the myths about us earning thousands a day/night!!

But if you do declare it, don't say you're an escort/prostitute, (tax department could be accused of living off your earnings!!) say private consultant or something. How many prostitutes do you know who've gained a mortgage through being honest about what they do for a living? SOCIETY ISN'T READY FOR US TO BE UP FRONT. Any maybe some of us aren't either.

TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER AND THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE DECLARING/NOT DECLARING YOUR INCOME. DON'T FEEL PRESSURED, SEEK ADVICE FIRST.

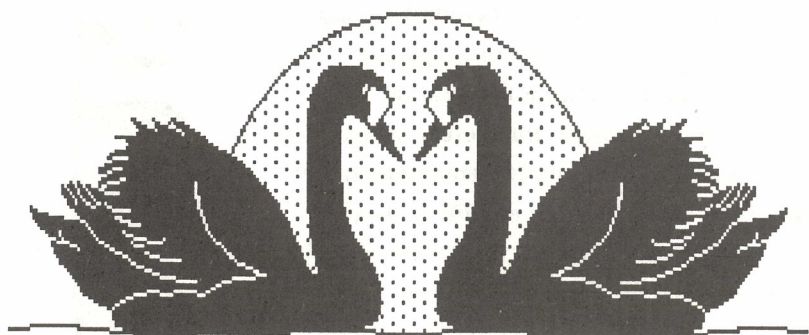
Some Answers to Taxing Questions For Self Employed Workers

WHAT ABOUT AN IRD NUMBER?

If you are self employed you must have an IRD number. These numbers are given for life, and you may find that you already have one. If not, these are obtained by phoning the IRD office nearest you. They will send you a form in the mail which you will need to complete and return. This form asks questions such as full name, address and date of birth. The procedure itself is simple but it should be remembered that these records are held for life. The IRD also can check these against such things as the Electoral Roll or, in extreme cases the Births Deaths and Marriages records.

WHAT ABOUT GST?

All people making a "service" are required to register for GST once they earn above \$30,000 per annum. Below that figure registration is voluntary. Registration involves contacting the IRD. They will send you a form to complete and registration will commence from that date. The IRD will not backdate a registration, so if it is decided to register then the IRD must be advised immediately. Once registered you will



need to complete returns of all income received over the period and send that to the IRD at 2 monthly intervals. The IRD regularly audit these returns. They check such things as the income records and that all invoices relating to claims made have been kept. Also once registered all service need to include a GST content.

WHAT ARE THE TAX RATES?

Tax starts at 15¢ per dollar for earnings up to \$9500 per annum and gradually increases to 24¢ in the dollar at \$30,875 pa. It then steps up to 33¢ in the dollar above that level. This income per annum includes income from all sources, including the dole or the DPB

Example:

Income as an escort	12000.00
DPB	13000.00
Total	25000.00

Tax	6000.00
Rebate	235.00

Nett tax payable	5765.00
Less PAYE deducted from DPB	

This puts the whole of the earnings as an escort into a higher tax bracket.

WHAT ABOUT FAMILY SUPPORT?

The DPB, dole etc include a Family Support payment. However, at the end of the year, all income is added together and the Family Support is calculated on the higher income level. This could mean that you have been overpaid Family Support and have to pay some or all of it back.

In the above example:

Family Support 1 child	
Paid through Social Welfare	\$1872.00

Based on income of	
\$25000, entitlement is only	522.00
Overpayment	1350.00

WHAT ABOUT EXPENSE CLAIMS?

Once in business the following types of expenses can be deducted from your income prior to it being taxed:

Work related clothing

That is, garments which can only be worn at work. Ordinary clothing and that expensive Gucci number are not tax deductible. Examples of deductible expenses are specialised leathers and negligees. The clothing cannot be "street wear".

Equipment

Items such as lubricating jellies, B&D gear, condoms etc are fully deductible.

Travel expenses

Travel to any outside engagements is deductible. To claim for travel expenses in your own vehicle it is necessary that a logbook be kept showing mileage at the start of the year and details of any business trips during the year.

Other expenses

All expenses which have a reasonable relationship to earning your income can be claimed. This could include the payment of your power bill if you work from home, and advertising.

All claims for expenses should be backed up by a receipt and should be paid through the one bank account, if at all possible.

WHAT RECORDS SHOULD YOU KEEP?

Registered for GST or not, many records need to be kept by self-employed people. These include:

Bank statements – including business income and expenses only

Invoices – for all deductible expenses claimed

Receipts – proof of all earnings and proof that any money not declared but banked has not been received as business takings.



Here is what YOU think about SIREN

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE BEST THING ABOUT SIREN?

It helps all working girls to understand what is happening in the sex world and helps those outside to understand about us.



It is informative and caring about people in the industry.



Honesty.



It is very easy to read and uses an uncomplicated language.



Its existence.



Full of information in regard to safer sex and the necessity for great health.



Letters and essays from the working girls and feedback from the clients.



The stories etc from our workers, health matters and general information.



Close contact with everyone in the industry.



It is informative and gives us a platform to air our views and help each other.



It is hard to say considering it is all good and interesting.



That it exists at all.



Reading of other "working girls" experiences and so much is relevant to me.



It is especially for sex workers and only thing of its kind.



It is by sex industry for sex industry workers.



You keep us informed with what we need to know and plus support.



Treating workers as people doing a job like anyone else.



The Health Articles.



It helps me to understand my body more and what other choices I have.



Readers own experiences.



That it gives prostitutes a unity - with a magazine we are a group of legitimate workers - not isolated oddball rejects.



Like SIREN's openness and the fact that it's real straight forward.



The best thing is that someone had the idea to produce the magazine for us all.



Doesn't use jargon.



All of it is very well written, very interesting. P.S. Keep

up the good work.



The Ugly Mugs page is very informative in an up front way, presented with clarity. I love the bits of prose and witty clever humour thrown in.



Reality, Honesty and Correct Information.



Very informative and frank also straight to the point.



That people involved with the industry write about their own attitudes and problems.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DON'T LIKE ABOUT SIREN?

The magazine does its job well. I find some of the feelings expressed a bit negative, though plenty of positive too.



Too much emphasis on needles, methadone, drugs and rehab, as most of working girls in Hamilton DO NOT USE HARD DRUGS - UNNECESSARY FOR most OF US.



Irregularity of issues, perhaps some articles that don't personally agree with me. But generally excellent, improving with each issue.



Sometimes too much emphasis

on needles etc, but I guess it's relevant to a lot of people out there.



Sometimes appears to treat readers like idiots.



Not enough issues of SIREN.



Too much I.V. info - Client put downs. (They also read SIREN too).



NO.



In one issue there was a poem with a raunchy put down of clients. We need psyching up not that.



No it's all very good.



Sometimes very clinical and long winded.



Not as yet. I have found the magazine is most helpful.



Not really always room for more and more though really hate the picture on the front cover.



Want more "Gossip". What are the girls up to?



All the drug information is irrelevant to me and stigmatises sex workers as drug users in this day and age I can live without that.



Rather too much emphasis on drug use which naturally implies it is extremely prevalent in the industry - not actually the case. Trans-sexual content rather heavy. Does not apply to the majority of sex industry workers. These people are not women so most womens issues do not apply to them. - I'm sorry.

x

Too much about the basic S.T.D.s (there are others).
Too much about AIDS stuff.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE SIREN TO GIVE MORE INFORMATION ON?

Could you please advise women on how to cope with work pressures and outline forms of Escapism, Alcoholism is overlooked grossly. I see so many sex industry workers drinking heaps.

✓

Can't think of anything at the moment.

✓

Just keep on going, I think SIREN is on the right track.

✓

Your rights and obligations as a parlour worker and the management's right and obligations.

✓

Any articles for Gay or Bi women in the sex industry.

✓

Not yet.

✓

Male sex workers money/legal advise all avenues of the sex industry.

✓

Yes, Police Scams.

✓

How legislation is going to have an effect on the industry in the future.

✓

Autonomy in our lives - taking control, independence and integrating with greater society. Emphasis on this fact, this is our only identity.

✓

The real issues that go on in the industry instead of keeping quiet because some sleazy parlour operator might be offended.

✓

How hard it can be, being a worker in the sex industry. How to cope with any emotional problems that can arise etc.

✓

I think health other than AIDS. How to keep looking good, fit and healthy and clothes to wear to work.

✓

I think SIREN covers everything.

✓

How to handle the "Ugly Mugs" when we meet them in the parlours.

✓

Health, Tips on handling clients who are either shy, drunk or awkward.

✓

More on Health conclusions the sex workers go through.

✓

History of Prostitution - what it's like in other countries - (I'll write articles for you and contact you when I've done it if you like).

✓

More information on changing economic climate. And a lot more positive

aspects of the industry. Care of AIDS patients - maybe sufferers experiences.

✓

Would like more on drug using.

✓

Real people giving more stories about themselves as a worker etc. Good stories, sad stories and helpful stories etc.

✓

Trans-society, Women's Health Issues (HIV included).

✓

Contagious types of Dermatitis - skin inflammations on clients to look out for. Also how easy it is to catch Hepatitis B or C. A diagram or something to show how to correctly put on a joe (condom).

✓

A lot of younger girls have joes break on them - we show them how to use joes correctly, but still they do it! A diagram in SIREN would complete their education.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS ABOUT SIREN OR NZPC?

Thank you for your service, the organisation of groups, of helpful phone numbers etc.

▲

There's too much about street and parlour workers, when in fact, there are more in the escort services in NZ than parlours. Write more about the agencies - give the escort majority a fair go.

▲

Sometimes SIREN makes out we are all unintelligent idiots eg. in one magazine

you wrote something about "faeces", then had in brackets "shit" straight after it, as if we are too thick to know what faeces are. Please talk to us on an equal level, instead of talking/writing down to us, as if we were on a lower level, than your staff writers. Thanks.

▲

Keep up the good work. I know it is time consuming and costs. I hope you can keep it up! Would be a loss without SIREN.

▲

Only one comment, keep them coming, and spread the good news around - even if you have to hand them out to all walks of life, everywhere and anywhere. (The magazine I am talking about). Thank you.

▲

Great stuff.

▲

Politically - what's happening? AIDS sufferers - what it is like for them, their partners, their families, - what discrimination do they face - who cares for them?

▲

Overall SIREN is informative but perhaps a little conservative and bias - it all becomes very familiar - perhaps like several articles are written by the same people - or are re-written maybe. There doesn't appear to be anything new. Just keep up the support and thanks.

▲

I find some parts of the magazine patronising, an insult to my intelligence. The readers are generally adult intelligent people,

don't talk to us like children. The constant barrage of AIDS info in every issue is really boring. Yes AIDS is out there, yes it kills but for goodness sake we all know that let's talk about something else.

Just as long as everyone in the industry stays together.

I think that SIREN and NZPC are the biggest and the best thing that has happened to sex workers mainly the street workers thank you for everything.

How about a jokes column or maybe a short story each week. Art competition something to get our minds actively going on something for pleasure rather than sex for money (understand).

I am a receptionist in Auckland and I honestly enjoy your magazine and show it to all my friends and clients that come into our parlour. Keep up the excellent work everyone, we're supporting you 100% K. RD. GALS.

A great magazine and I would like to see publication to continue for a very long time. Good on you people for bringing it out. Something for us workers. KEEP IT UP.

I read the magazine from cover to cover, I was impressed with it's balance, information and clearness of the printed work – Keep up the good work.

Keep up the good work Ko Te Mea Tuatahi Te Ora O Te Iwi (First the Health of the People).

Include more trading, buying and selling.

Do keep up with your splendid work with two years just completed, I see no reason why you shouldn't be around in twenty two years time. Great success to you all. LOVE AND CARE DOES WORK.

Good on ya, keep it up and I think you are doing a great job.

You're doing a great job with this magazine. I'm always really impressed with the individuals and groups who take responsibility for their own health and the health of others. Congratulations on a neat magazine and keep up the good work.

Keep up the good work and excellent support network. You are a small shiny star filling at least a tiny part of the black hole that is the ignorance and suspicion of self righteous Philistines. I like the label junkie hooker, why not be an extremist better than a homemaker.

Like to retain SIREN as primarily a voice for/by sex workers rather than clients or management ie. parlours etc and to see issues rather than work that affect our lives. In this issue good to see articles written in a fairly accessible way on pornography, boy-friends/partners attitudes and getting off drugs. I think they're

great and will effectively empower women to change their lives for the better or at least make them think. They need to be reiterated as does the Safer Sex issue – not just AIDS, all STDs and general common probs. eg, thrush, cystitis, warts and sabies that can be caught on the job. NZPC please don't be complacent about shift fees, fines and the euphamisims. No one is entitled to the money I make with my body. Please do more about it and oppressive working environments which I guess means legal lobbying. Not too much to ask?

Find SIREN excellent in terms of updating information. Our work as Public Health Nurses involves STD's and infectious diseases your mag is really helpful.

Some Exposure of unlisted Escort Agencies employing "under AGE girls" and paying them very little for their services. We have a few here.

I think that SIREN or NZPC are a great organisation the more people should know about it not only workers but the public should be included in safer sex! I think that schools should be

educated about condoms and needles. Thank you for giving me this book I have learnt more about myself and my body.

It is the best thing that has happened to the sex industry out of the worst thing (AIDS) comes NZPC and the supply of clean needles, Semi Legality or semi-acceptability for addicts and sex workers. I've been in therapy for addiction and now thanks to added self esteem helped partly by NZPC – when they want to analyse my negative reasons for being a prostitute ie. the following are society's theories no self worth, being abused as a child leads to needing abuse to make you feel safe.

I can now say – BULLSHIT I choose my job as a career, a profession. I am good at it I help people it is really interesting well paid with good hours. Why don't you the therapist analyse why accountants are obsessed with money (Very Anal) or why politicians are so much into control and making life miserable for others (Bullied as a child) and why people work for NZPC (totally enlightened humans). So hope you get my point. Thanks a lot. Keep up the great work.



ESCORTS ✉ ESCORTS ♥ ESCORTS ✿ ESCORTS ♦ ESCORTS ✱ ✿ ESCORTS ✱

I am a twenty three year old mother. I have two boys both under the age of five. A few weeks ago I started working as an escort with an agency. So little is said of this branch of the "game". So much is thought and believed, most of it based on ideas of many years of misconception.

I little thought when my husband and I separated that I would end up selling my services, but what else is there for many of us? The money we receive from the government is little enough for one, let alone three. Very few people know what I do as I don't want to see the expressions or hear the

comments I would be sure to get - "two kids and she's out screwing..."

I have heard comments of this kind aimed at others in this profession, but the people making them don't stop to think just how we feel about what we are doing. And after all, let's face facts; if there was no demand there would be no supply.

It's not easy, either, on me or my children. Yet what I earn does so much. Buys food, pays bills, and buys things that would otherwise be a real struggle - clothes, appliances, etc. With no qualifications, what avenue is open when

outgoing expenses are over incoming "allowance"?

So, for so many days a week, so many hours a day; on goes the lingerie and the feminine apparel, the make up and air of "woman of the world". Off to work - switching off hour by hour to what's going on and allow your body to be used by those willing to pay.

At the end of the time it's back home, the lies to those that don't know, the semblance of a "normal" life that somehow doesn't seem so normal any more. Housework, children, shopping... sex, and so it goes on.

I'm glad I work for an agency rather than some other forms of the game. The drivers provide security, the girls give companionship, and the job - money. Although on first visits to a client you don't know what to expect, you know that back-up is available if you need it. We ring in when we arrive, we ring to say we're leaving, and if we don't ring people find out why and take action. That action may or may not involve the authorities, but it's all

very nicely done.

Yes, some parts of what we do are fun, but so much is just something to do and put behind you. Even when you are not working it follows you around and things remind you of what you are doing all the time. You have to watch what you say and who you say it to. I just don't want my children to know what their Mum does to keep their home together.

Agency name supplied. Thank you

ESCORTS ✉ ESCORTS ♥ ESCORTS ✿ ESCORTS ♦ ESCORTS ✱ ESCORTS ✿ ESCORTS

Hi, I'm a nineteen year old single woman and I have been in this business for only two months. I really didn't have a lot of choice in the matter as I have a lot of debts which I'm presently paying off, and was desperate in need of the money.

I started off in a parlour, which I didn't enjoy at all as the girls were very catty, and the way we were sort of lined up in our seats and chosen from was pretty butch. I worked in the massage parlour for about a month, then applied for a job in the paper for the escort

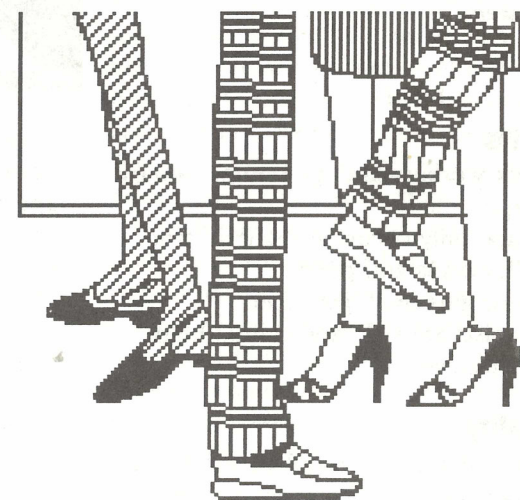
agency I am presently working for.

I find that, I don't have any time to myself any more as I am working full time from either 10am or 12 noon until 3am, and it gets pretty exhausting - but it's a lot more enjoyable. I really like the element of surprise when I'm wondering what the next client is going to look and act like. There is always quite a bit of danger involved in this sort of work, and we always have to be very cautious. We have drivers that take us to our jobs, and they behave as our body

guards as well. We also have a phone in system for security.

It is very difficult to have a relationship while doing my job. I had recently started with this guy and we broke up as we didn't spend any time together, and he couldn't really cope with the idea of the job that I am doing.

All of my friends know what I'm doing, but none of my family do and I think they would just about die if they discovered my money problems. It can get very stressful at times, and sometimes I can't sleep as I'm over-



tired by the time I get home - then the next day I'm having difficulty keeping my eyes open during work.

It took a lot of adjusting to, but now I'm getting used to the long hours and I am learning - now- to pick up on exactly how to please the client and what he expects of me. The other escorts, both male and female, all

really stick together and help each other out if we get into strife, and likewise with the boss.

All in all, I am now getting rid of my debts and earning good money. I have adjusted to the idea of what I'm doing, and a lot of the time I really enjoy myself. You just have to learn to take the good with the bad, that's all.

Agency name supplied. Thank you

Sexual Abuse: The Facts

Sexual abuse is a violation of basic human rights and is a serious crime against a person. No one deserves to be raped, and no one has the right to sexually abuse another person. All women experience some form of sexual abuse at some point in their lives – regardless of age, race, class or ability. The following are some of the myths and facts about sexual abuse for sex workers.



Myths

- Sex workers can't be traumatised by rape.
- Rape only occurs at night in dark alley-ways and parks.
- Nice girls don't get raped.
- Rapists are sick, and cannot help themselves.

Reality

Sexual abuse is a violent and humiliating experience for anyone, regardless of occupation.

Rape can occur at anytime (day or night) – at any place, eg: in parlours, on outcalls, in a client's car, or on the street.

Any worker is at potential risk of being raped. Anyway, what's a "nice" girl?

Rapists are "normal" men. They come from all classes, income levels, races and age groups.

Survivors of sexual abuse have important rights. If you have been raped – whether the rapist was a client, a lover, a relative, an acquaintance or a stranger, your right to control over your own body has been violated.

You have the right to decide what action you will take as a result of the rape.

You have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and understanding.

You have the right to information.

You have the right to privacy and confidentiality.

Most cities and towns in New Zealand have Rape Crisis or Help Centres. Citizen's Advice Bureaux should be able to provide the phone numbers of your local centre if it is not listed in the phone book. As well as offering ongoing face-to-face counselling, most centres provide a 24 hour crisis phone line for support and information. Arrangements for medical examinations can also be made through the centres.

Strategies for Workers to Help Prevent, or Get Out of Potentially Abusive Situations

There are no 100% guarantees that things will always work, but the following are some suggestions that have worked for others.

1. You have the right to set limits about touching or sexual behaviour.

Everyone has different limits about what sort of touching or sexual behaviour they find acceptable.

2. Tell other people if they go over your limits. Don't rely on ESP if someone has reached your limit, tell them quickly and clearly. You have the right to say no.
3. Trust your feelings. If you feel you are being pressured into something you don't want, then you **are** being pressured.
4. Notice any person that is acting in a way that doesn't seem okay to you. For example, someone who enjoys the fact that you are uncomfortable, someone who blocks your way, someone who tries to grab you or push you around, someone who doesn't listen when you say "no".
5. Be loud, rude, angry, outspoken. Get angry if a client does something to you that you don't want. Act immediately with a response, yell if you need to. Stand up for yourself, it is okay to be rude to someone who is pressuring you. Even if it hurts their feelings, remember that they weren't worried about hurting **your** feelings.

6. Defend yourself and support other sex workers that are defending themselves. Self defence doesn't just mean doing karate or kung fu, it means any way that a person manages to either avoid, get out of, or survive an attack by another person. It could be talking your way out of a situation, running away, yelling, kicking, punching or even going through an attack and concentrating on surviving. One way of finding out about self defence is to go to a YWCA Positive Action Self Defence Course for women (any age or fitness).

When Choosing a Counsellor...

- It is worth taking the time to find someone whose training, style and personality are suited to what you need.
- You have the right to shop around.
- Ask others who have had positive counselling experiences.

You are Entitled to a Counsellor who will be

- someone you can trust and with whom you will feel comfortable talking about the most intimate details of your life.
- non-judgmental – who will not blame you (directly or indirectly) for the problem

- respectful and considerate
- sensitive and warm
- compassionate, genuine and honest
- someone who will try to see things from your point of view
- someone whose ideas makes sense to you and who works in a partnership with you
- someone you like

You have the right to choose whether you go alone, with your partner, or with other family members.

NZPC thanks the Wellington Sexual Abuse Help Centre for their assistance and information.

Under Agers Working in the Sex Industry

As a worker, I've always felt sad at seeing young under-age women working in the sex industry. Now that the NZ government has brought in new rules about who can and can't get the dole under the age of 18, it's even harder for someone under that age to survive financially...especially if living at home isn't an option.

But really the sex industry isn't the place to be either. The reason the law places 16 as the age of legal consent for sex, and 18 the legal age to work in a parlour...is to protect younger women from exploitation of "adults" and the management of the parlours.

When I worked in my late teens, I thought that I was pretty clued up and could take care of myself, but I see now just how much shit I put up with then, that I definitely wouldn't put up with now, that I have AGE and experience on my side.

It is easy to be exploited when you're young...especially if you're working illegally.

Management, though overall there are lots of great places to work and excellent managers, there is the occasional male operator who tries to 'try you out', if you're new and young. This is not on!!...but if you're new how do you know that, and you may think you have to do him a favour to keep your job.

I know money isn't easy to come by if your 15-16 and can't get the dole, but think hard before you embark on a career in the sex industry...and maybe

drop into your local NZPC centre and see if someone there can give you some ideas and support.

And managers Think hard too...IT'S ILLEGAL TO EMPLOY UNDER AGERS IN YOUR PARLOURS. IS IT WORTH LOSING YOUR LICENCE OVER?? AND DRAWING THE ATTENTION OF THE VICE SQUAD TO YOUR PARLOUR...NOT REALLY EH!!!!

If you're underage and you are working...take real good care out there...ALWAYS use a condom, and make sure you make your money work for you.

NZPC

Comment: Youth Concerns

As an 18 year old male, I find it hard to practise safe sex. We know that sex without condoms is dangerous, as HIV and other STDs have an untroubled path into our bodies.

The main problem seems to me to be the prohibitive cost of condoms. In chemists and petrol stations, a packet of twelve condoms costs between \$13-\$18. That's a lot of money for someone who is on the dole, in their first job, or still at school. In my situation, when I was still at school and supporting myself, a packet of condoms meant I had no money left over for a week. It is possible to buy packets of three condoms for about \$3, but they generally only last a night.

A lot of young New Zealand males also have an image barrier. We frequently get embarrassed when asking for a packet of condoms at a chemist. Some guys prefer to save their "rep" than to practise safe sex, which frequently can make them end up in a more embarrassing situation of having to explain to partner(s) that they could have an STD, (which I know about from personal experience). At that age many people also find condoms, well...a bit awkward. First sexual experiences are awkward anyway – without having to stop to put on a condom where there is a danger of losing your hard-on. However, when you have experience and a little more imagination, condoms can become a very interesting part of the love-making process.

We are growing up in an area of some frightening STDs, such as HIV, syphilis and gonorrhea – which we need to protect ourselves from. Condoms are the most convenient way of stopping them.

Condoms need to be freely available to young people. Improved access to condoms such as ability to get them through school guidance counsellors. They should at least be more accessible to young people like myself at a reduced cost.

The ironic thing is, that I'm thinking that I might have to start work in the sex industry – just so that I can afford to pay for my condoms!!



A newspaper photograph of Swedish police arresting a sex worker with HIV. The police appear to be wearing protective clothing including helmets, thick leather gloves and bulky jackets. Although our picture is somewhat fuzzy, the worker seems to have been ensconced in a white shroud with a plastic bag over her head! Is this ignorance or what!!

To Work or Not To Work

From "To Work or Not to Work? – Questions Facing HIV Positive Sex Workers". – by Cheryl Overs, Consultant; Scarlett Alliance, – (the national umbrella organisation for sex worker groups in Australia).

What follows is a summary of some of the key points from the above entitled paper, which was presented by Cheryl Overs at a conference held in Canberra from 6-8 May 1991 on the "Sex Industry and Public Policy". The paper came about as a result of the Scarlett Alliance's awareness of the

need for reasoned discussion about the fate of people with HIV/AIDS who work in the sex industry. A six month consultation was initiated with workers, clients, sex business operators, people who provide services to sex workers, and those responsible for formulating relevant policy. Some of the major themes that emerged as a result of this process are as follows:

Media Coverage

Sex workers have faced some of the worst media coverage relating to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Reporting has been ill-informed and hysterical. Even commentators who are expected to be able to analyse the issues dismiss the idea that HIV positive people are not to be feared, and that people are responsible for their own health by practising safe sex. This applies for sex industry workers and non sex industry workers alike.

Should HIV Positive People Work in the Sex Industry?

Given that most people realise that the exclusion of people with HIV/AIDS from daily life is both unjust and

unnecessary, how does this concept apply in relation to female, male and transsexual sex workers? In other words, should people with HIV/AIDS work in the sex industry?

If the answer to that is "no", then the next question is: how should people with HIV/AIDS be identified and excluded from the various legal and illegal sex industries which exist?

If the answer is "yes", then how is that justifiable against the weight of public opinion on the subject?

If the answer is "yes, but only if they work safely",

several questions arise. Firstly, what is safe sex? Secondly, how do we know if safe sex is being practised? Thirdly, if safe sex is not being practised, what mechanisms can be put in place to exclude an HIV+ person from working in the sex industry?

And the fundamental question seems to be – whether or not people with HIV/AIDS should be sexually active at all.

Of the people interviewed who thought that people with HIV/AIDS should discontinue sexual activity, there were two categories of views based on:

- those people who do not understand how HIV/AIDS is transmitted, or do not believe that the real facts about transmission are known.
- those people who do know the facts about safe sex, but say it is not safe enough because it is not 100% safe

The Commonwealth Department of Health, AFAO and the Scarlett Alliance all support the idea that barrier precautions (such as condoms) do have the capacity to render safe sex. This means it is reasonable for people with HIV/AIDS to continue to be sexually active. If safe sex in its various forms is effective in preventing transmission of HIV at an acceptable rate, is there a difference between the commercial and the non-commercial setting – given that we know that

HIV is not transmitted by exchanging cash or credit cards.

Sex worker advocates and AIDS organisations take the view that there is a mutual obligation between sexual partners, which does not change just because one partner is paying. Therefore, it is unfair and dangerous to assume that the non-paying partner (client) is HIV negative, and that the sex worker should be tested and can proceed to work only if the test result is negative.

Another argument for differentiating between sex workers and other people living with HIV is the idea that sex workers have greater numbers of sexual partners and that the risk of safe sex accidents and subsequent HIV transmission is therefore increased. That sex workers have more sexual partners is by no means certain. Some non-sex workers have penetrative sex with more partners than some sex workers. For many men and women sex work is not a regular or even frequent occupation.

If it is accepted that it is unrealistic as well as unwarranted to exclude all people with HIV/AIDS from the sex industry, resources must be allocated and policy focused to ensure that transmission of HIV in commercial sex industries is minimised. This has to be achieved through education – primarily of clients.

Finally, what kind of support and incentive can

be provided for those HIV positive sex workers who wish to leave the sex industry or are compelled to because they have been found, hopefully by an informed and just process, to be unable or unwilling to work safely. One strategy which is often mooted is to provide them with income alternatives, prioritised access to support services such as counselling, housing and drug substitution. However, a fundamental problem exists in relation to prioritising resources for all HIV positive sex workers. It is unfair and discriminatory to allocate resources that other people living with HIV/AIDS might have greater claim to, just on an experimental attempt to

alleviate some imagined, possible risk to people who wish to flaunt the AIDS prevention messages to which they have been exposed.

To summarise the answer to the question “should people with HIV/AIDS work in the sex industry?” – it is “yes”, there is no reason why any person with HIV should not have safe sexual activity. It is hoped that this paper will be used to generate discussion amongst people who agree and disagree with the views and ideas that have been expressed in it.

For more information on Cheryl Overs paper, contact NZPC, P O Box 11-412, Manners St, Wellington.

CONTACT NUMBERS

For information on your local drug user group or needle and syringe exchange scheme contact:

ADIO
227A Symonds St,
Auckland
09-3098-519

WIDE
282 Cuba St,
Wellington
04-382-8404

DIVO
Dunedin
03-4792-300

AIDS Hotline
Tollfree 0800-802-437

I V Union
30 Joseph Street,
Box 1942
Palmerston North
063-71-059 (24 hour
phone contact)

CIVDURG
2nd Floor
130 Kilmore St
Christchurch
03-652-293

คุยกัน...

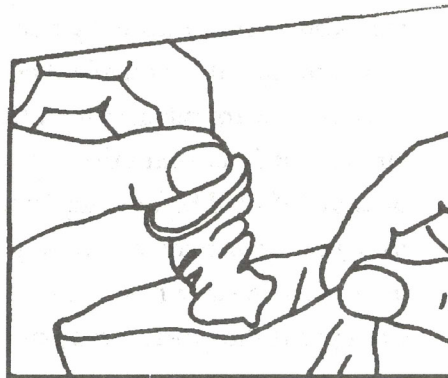
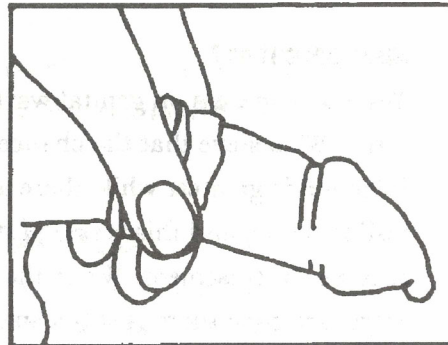
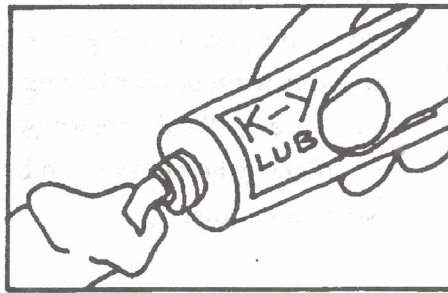
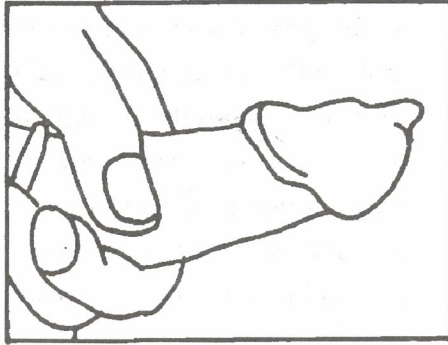
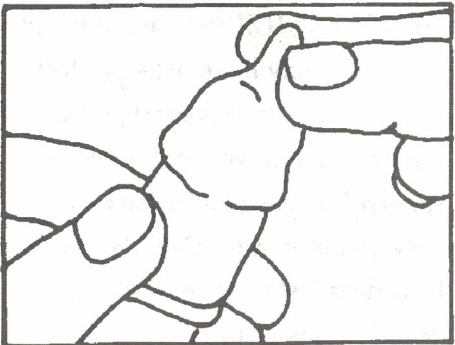
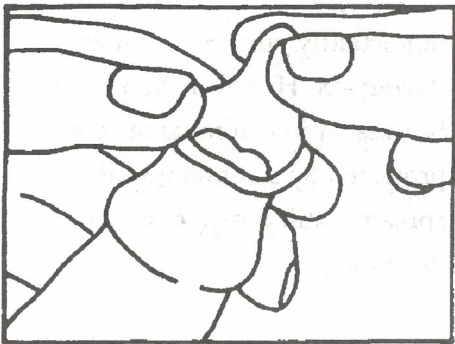
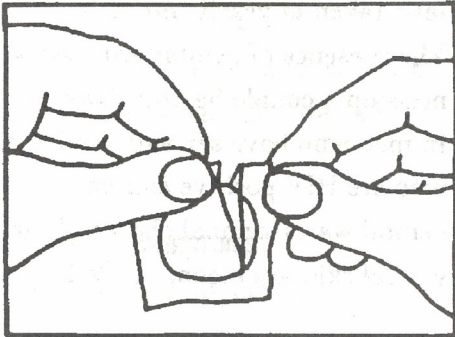
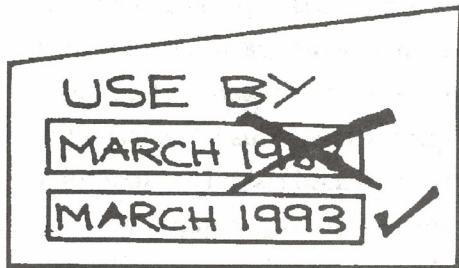
เมื่อประมาณปลายปี 1990 ดิฉันได้รับการติดต่อจากเดบี่ ชิวทาวนให้กับเอ็น แชด พี ซี (NZPC) สาขาโอ๊คแลนด์ เอ็น แชด พี ซี เป็นองค์กรที่สร้างขึ้นเพื่อช่วยเหลือผู้พิการในสถานบริการทางเพศ ในการให้ความรู้ คำแนะนำ และจัดทำข่าวสารต่างๆที่จะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อบุคคลเหล่านั้น โดยที่เดบี่ต้องการที่จะได้นักไทยมาช่วยเหลือเกี่ยวกับการติดต่อ ให้คำแนะนำ กับพนักงานชาวไทยในสถานบริการทั้งหลายในโอ๊คแลนด์ รวมไปถึงการช่วยแปลเอกสารต่างๆเป็นภาษาไทย เพื่อให้ความรู้ด้านสุขภาพอนามัย และการป้องกันตัวเองให้ปลอดภัยจากแกมโรค และโรคติดต่ออื่นๆ ซึ่งรวมทั้งโรคเอดส์ด้วย

เนื่องจากพนักงานสถานบริการเป็นกลุ่มคนที่มีโอกาสที่จะติดโรคดังกล่าวได้ง่าย การป้องกันตัวเองที่ดีที่สุด ก็คือ การใช้ถุงยางอนามัย หรือ "คอนโดม" เดบี่จึงไปแจกถุงยางอนามัยฟรี แก่พนักงานตามสถานบริการต่างๆอยู่เป็นประจำ พวกเราที่ทำงานอยู่ในโอ๊คแลนด์ควรรู้จัก หรือจำเดบี่ได้กันดีอยู่แล้ว

ในบางครั้งที่เดบี่ไปเยี่ยมเยียนตามสถานบริการที่มีคนไทยทำงานอยู่ ก็จะทำให้ดิฉันไปด้วย เพราะนอกจากการแจกถุงยางอนามัย หรือแจกเอกสารแล้ว เราอาจจะได้มีโอกาสพูดคุยกันบ้าง หากใครมีปัญหาดังกล่าวมาช่วยเหลือ เราก็จะได้ให้คำแนะนำกันไป เรื่องที่ถามกันอยู่เสมอกๆ ก็มีเรื่องเกี่ยวกับจะไปตรวจร่างกายได้ที่ไหน เรื่องยาคุมกำเนิด หรือ เมื่อมีอาการผิดปกติเกิดขึ้นจะทำอย่างไรดี

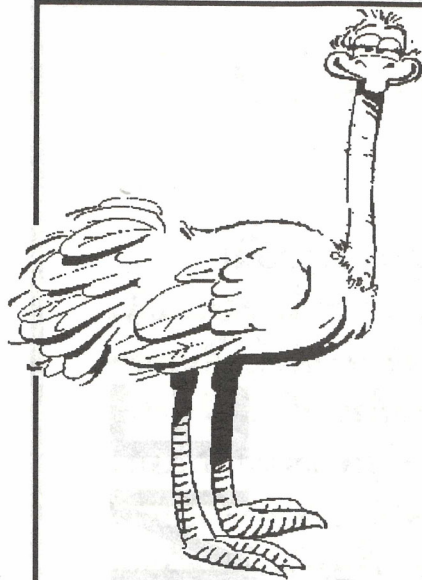
จากที่ได้พูดคุยและรับทราบปัญหาต่างๆเหล่านี้ เราจึงได้จัดทำภาษาไทยขึ้น เพื่อให้ความรู้เกี่ยวกับคลินิกเอส ที ดี ซึ่งเป็นคลินิกที่ให้การตรวจรักษาแกมโรค และช่วยให้บริการตรวจเลือดหาโรคเอดส์ด้วย อีกทั้งในเทปนั้นยังมีการให้ความรู้เกี่ยวกับแกมโรคชนิดต่างๆ โรคตับอักเสบ บี และโรคเอดส์ ซึ่งเราได้แจกเทปดังกล่าวไปตามสถานบริการที่เราว่ามีคนไทยทำงานอยู่ ใครที่ยังไม่ได้พัวพันกันพัวกันได้ หรือที่โนนยังไม่ได้รับก็ติดต่อขอจากเราได้ ส่วนใครที่ได้พัวแล้ว ขอให้ช่วยบอกเล่าต่อกันไปด้วย

หากอยากรู้อะไรเพิ่มเติม หรือมีปัญหาที่อยากรู้ถาม ต้องการคำแนะนำ ที่เราพอจะช่วยได้ ก็ขอให้บอกเมื่อเราพบกัน เราสองคนยินดีช่วยเหลือ หรือจะติดต่อกับเราได้ที่สำนักงานเอ็น แชด พี ซี โอ๊คแลนด์ หมายเลขโทรศัพท์ 3666106 และถ้าจะเขียนจดหมายมาคุยกัน กรุณาส่งมาที่ PO Box 68-509, Newton, Auckland.



CONDOMS

HOW TO USE ONE



STD Information

In the last SIREN under the STD section, genital herpes, chlamydia and gonorrhea were discussed. In this issue, we cover Genital Warts and Trichomoniasis ("Trich" for short) and Hepatitis B.

GENITAL WART VIRUS INFECTION (Human Papilloma Virus or HPV)

This is the commonest problem seen at Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinics in New Zealand. In many people warts on the genitals (ie. penis, anus vulvar or vaginal areas) are easily recognised as fleshy lumps or bumps. In others genital warts may be more difficult to recognise and may require an expert's opinion. Still others may have the wart virus present in the genital area without any outward sign of warts. Wart virus only infects the outer layer of skin. It is not carried in the blood and it does not grow inside the body.

How and when did I get it?

Genital wart virus is transmitted from person to person by direct contact. In most cases this means sexual contact between men and

women, men and men, or women and women. Genital Wart virus may also be transmitted by non sexual means. It is possible that some people are infected with the virus at birth, or that others may become infected before they first have sex. Obviously therefore, it is impossible to say when and where you caught the virus. It may have been years ago or it could have been recently.

Can I pass it on?

Yes, you can pass on genital wart virus. We believe that the chance of infection is greatest while there are visible warts, and this is one of the reasons for treatment. When the warts are gone there is still a small risk of passing it to others. Many women have a smear test that suggests the presence of genital wart virus without ever having had obvious warts. We do not know conclusively whether this can be passed on to others.

Can you ever get rid of warts or the wart virus?

Visible genital warts can be treated at the STD clinic or your local GP. They will disappear although this may take several treatments. Your body's immune system can remove the virus on its own or it may remain in a dormant state in the skin for years.

Are there risks associated with Genital Wart Virus?

In men the presence of genital warts

or the wart virus does not seem associated with an increased cancer risk. The main risk for men with genital warts is passing the virus on to new sexual partners. In women the presence of certain types of genital wart virus is associated with an increased risk of an abnormal smear test. The majority of these changes are minor and will require nothing more than regular smear tests taken at yearly intervals.

The presence of genital warts does not stop a couple having children. In men who have sex with men and who are HIV positive and have genital warts, annual checks of the genital skin are recommended.

Condoms can prevent the transmission of genital wart virus and importantly other STD's if used during sex. However the virus may be present in genital areas not protected by a condom so that spread is still possible. Use your judgement

So what should I do if I have Genital Warts?

DON'T PANIC!! People often feel dirty and may have negative feelings about themselves when they are told they have genital warts. Remember the genital wart virus is very common and **ANYONE** can get it. It does **NOT** mean that you are promiscuous or unclean.

STOP SMOKING. Yes, smoking can lower our immune systems so that our bodies cannot remove the wart virus. Get all visible genital

warts treated at your local STD Clinic or GP. Use condoms during sex. Women should have a cervical smear test done once a year. Finally if you have more questions about warts don't hesitate to ask the doctor, nurse, or health adviser at the clinic.

TRICHOMONIASIS

Trichomoniasis or "Trich" for short is a genital infection caused by the presence of parasite organisms called trichomonads. It is one of the more common of the sexually transmitted diseases.

Trichomoniasis is usually caught by sexual contact with an infected person.

What about symptoms?

Symptoms usually develop 1-4 weeks after contact with an infected person. In about 15% of cases there are no symptoms. When symptoms do occur they can include a discharge which is characteristically yellowish green, frothy and with a fishlike odour. When the discharge is profuse, redness and inflammation of the upper thighs can occur and cause discomfort on walking. Itching and pain on passing urine can also occur. To confirm the presence of trichomonads it is necessary to take a specimen of discharge from the vagina and examine it under a microscope. Sometimes trichomoniasis is discovered when a Pap smear is being read.

Men are usually without symptoms and can act as carriers. However, a discharge and pain on urination may occur.

Treatment

It is important to remember that infections can occur again and again if all partners are not treated. The standard drugs for this condition are Flagyl and Fasnig. It is important to remember that you should not:

- drink alcohol whilst you are being treated as you may feel nauseated,
- take either if you are pregnant,
- have sexual intercourse whilst you are being treated.

It is important to follow up your treatment by a further examination to ensure that the treatment has been effective.

In order to prevent reinfection always use condoms/lubricant.

HEPATITIS B

Hepatitis is a swelling of the liver, which results in the liver not working properly. It is caused by a virus. Hepatitis B is spread through close physical contact with the blood, saliva, semen or other body fluids of an infected person. The symptoms of Hepatitis B may include:

- loss of appetite
- stomach upsets and pains
- mild fever
- general aches and pains
- nausea and vomiting
- yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)
- dark urine
- pale bowel motions

Some people, especially children, only have mild symptoms. Others have none. **What you should do if you think you have Hepatitis B**

- see a doctor immediately for diagnosis and treatment

- follow the doctor's advice carefully
- find out how infectious you are, you may need to stay off work for a while. (The most infectious period is from several weeks before symptoms appear until several weeks or months later. However, a few people - called "carriers" still have the virus in their blood and can remain infectious for many years.)

Take the following precautions if you have Hepatitis B

- stay at home while ill and until your doctor tells you otherwise
- don't share personal items such as toothbrushes and razors
- avoid close contact or sex with others who are not protected, until you have been given the all clear by your doctor
- use a condom whenever you have sex as this may help prevent the spread of Hepatitis B as well as other STDs
- do not have yourself tattooed, have your ears pierced, have acupuncture, or share syringes or needles
- do not donate blood

REMEMBER: Condoms will help protect you against Hepatitis B and other STDs.

Treatment

There is no special treatment for Hepatitis B. Your doctor will give you advice about rest, diet and alcohol. It may be several months before you are back to normal. Other people you have been in close contact with, eg. flatmates, partners, workmates, would be advised to be tested for Hepatitis B.

UPdate

Working Girls

Watch out for *Working Girls* a book (Penguin) by Jan Jordan (a trustee for NZPC) and 17 women from various background and experiences in the sex industry. The book as with most things to do with prostitution attracted immense media/public interest. Check with your local bookshop.

Roberta Perkins Visits

Roberta Perkins, a long-time advocate for the rights of prostitutes, visited NZPC recently. Roberta wrote *Being a Prostitute* and more recently a book called (also!!) *Working Girls*. published by the Australian Institute of Criminology. The blurb on the back of the book says the book "is an invaluable source of information for those

with an interest in the issue of decriminalisation".

WHO Conference

A delegate from NZPC was invited to attend a conference in Manila (Phillipines) by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on strategies for the prevention and control of AIDS among commercial sex workers. The delegate has just arrived back in the country as this issue goes to print. However she has this to say in brief "It was very moving to be at a conference with delegates from countries like the Peoples Republic of China, Malaysia, Laos, Vietnam, Phillipines, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Macau, and Australia. It was obvious that the New Zealand sex industry

is well advanced in terms of the responsible role it has played in preventing the transmission of HIV.

The Good Woman of Bangkok

a film by Dennis O'Rourke
Keep a look out for this film. Dennis O'Rourke writes "It is a film about prostitution as a metaphor for capitalism, here played out across the borders of race and culture; about prostitution as a metaphor for all relations between women and men. It is also about the voyeuristic tendencies which are inherent in all film making and film viewing. It is my hope that... we are confronted with a vision of ourselves, thus forcing consideration of how personal sexuality affects political and philosophical beliefs".

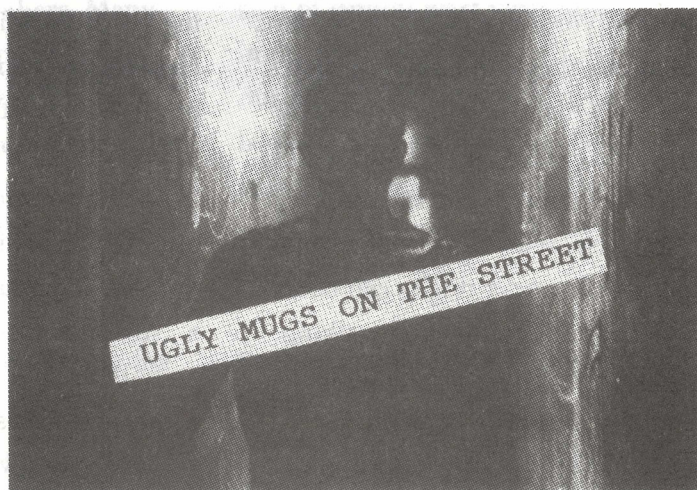
U G L Y M U G S

If you have a client who turns out to be an Ugly Mug, let us know with as much detail as possible for inclusion in the Ugly Mugs list.

When you are working, have someone keep an eye on you when you get into a vehicle, so that they get a description of the vehicle. Sometimes you may get dumped out of the vehicle - try and memorise the vehicle's registration number if you can.

Be Careful Out There. Practice Safe Sex. Look After One Another

If you would like the Ugly Mugs list sent to you regularly, just call our Collective branches and ask.



Ugly Mugs on the Street

Having this list and sharing your knowledge of Ugly Mugs with others helps to make working in the sex industry safer. If you have had trouble with a client, fill out the description sheet on the next page, then phone it through to your branch of NZPC (AK-3666-106/WGTN 828-791/CHCH 652-595/ Dunedin 4776 988 - or bring it to us.

U G L Y
M U G S

DESCRIPTION OF VEHICLE

Colour

Make

Distinguishing features

Number Plate

DESCRIPTION OF MUG

Name

Age

Height

Hair/Beard

Eyes

Distinguishing features (tattoos etc)

Nationality

What does he do?

Weapons

Credit Card #



NZPC

NZ Prostitutes Collective
National Office PO Box 11-412
Manners St, Wellington.

We provide...

- Support and a friendly environment
- Condoms and water-based lubricants
- Magazines for workers in the sex industry
- Information on HIV/AIDS and other STDs
- Referral service to sympathetic doctors and other complementary agencies

NZPC Centres

● **Auckland**
227a Symonds St
Phone (09) 3666-106

● **Wellington**
282 Cuba St
Phone (04) 382-8791

● **Christchurch**
Phone (03) 652-595

● **Dunedin**
Phone 03-4776-988



So

Pop in and have a chat or phone us up! If you get the answer-phone, be sure to leave a message and someone will call you back as soon as possible.